

## Getting Up When You're Knocked Down, Part 1 - 1 Corinthians 4:1-1 – July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014

- Today's teaching will be part one of a new series I've titled, "Getting Up When You're Knocked Down."
- I chose this title for a number of reasons chief of which is, Paul reveals several ways he was able to get back up after being knocked down.
- And, if there were ever an example of remaining steadfast in spite of all the adversity and opposition, it would have to be the Apostle Paul.

2 Corinthians 11:24-28 NIV (24) Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. (25) Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, (26) I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. (27) I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. (28) Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.

- This begs the question of how is it that Paul was able to survive and even thrive in the face of beatings, imprisonments, and shipwrecks?
- If we were honest with ourselves, we'd have to admit the best and strongest amongst us would've probably tossed in the towel and quit.
- So what was Paul's secret? What was it about him that enabled him to get back up and keep pressing on after all that he'd been through?

- I would submit that here in the chapter before us, Paul will give to us the keys that unlocks the mystery if you will, of how to keep getting up.
- Perhaps better said, how we too can survive and even thrive when the flesh and the world beats us up, while the devil is knocking us down.
- Actually, the Lord has been ministering to me as of late, that many, especially in these last days are really taking a beating from the enemy.

- It may be a shipwrecked marriage, an imprisoning addiction, going without of unemployment, or daily pressures and concerns of parenting.
- It may be the danger of a medical diagnosis and with it the perilous prognosis added to all the other things that one faces on a daily basis.
- The reality is that we as believers in and followers of Jesus Christ are not exempt from any of this, which is why many of us go through this.

- Thankfully, the Word of God is not silent concerning the fiery trials and perilous pressures of life, and such is the case with our text today.
- I would suggest that woven into the fabric of this chapter are a number of practical ways to keep getting up and pressing on no matter what.
- We see the first way in verse one, which is of paramount importance as it relates to understanding of the other practical ways that follow.

### 1. Maintain a servant's humility (Verse 1)

(1) So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God.

- v1 Paul says, first and foremost, men should always regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God.
- It's interesting to note that the word Paul uses for servant is not the more common Greek word, "doulos," meaning that of a bond slave.
- He instead uses the Greek word "hyperetas," which is what they called under-rowers who took orders as subordinates to the ships captain.

- The reason I point this out is because it would require this type of servant to maintain a genuine humility in order to survive and even thrive.
- In other words, it wouldn't bode well for an under-rower were he to demand that he had rights or insist that he had already paid his dues.
- So too is this true for us as under rowers, which is also translated as "ministers" in the sense that we have the lowest position on the ship.

- Here's where I'm going with all this, as under rowers, we don't determine the destination, we follow the orders of the captain of the ship.
- It's when in our pride and obstinance, we insist on charting the course of our own destiny that we get ourselves into a whole lot of trouble.
- However, when I maintain the humility of a servant, I won't fall prey to this notion that I somehow deserve to be treated better than I am.

- I've heard it said that the best gauge by which to measure whether or not I'm truly a servant is how I react when I'm treated like a servant.
- Herein lies one of the most important secrets to Paul's success in his ability to keep getting back up every time he had been knocked down.
- He knew not only that he was a servant, he knew whose servant he was, namely, the person of Jesus Christ, the master-pilot of the ship.

I like how one commentator said it, "Under-rowers serve Christ the master-pilot, helping forward the ship of the Church toward the haven of heaven."

- If you were to ask me what I thought was one of the most important keys to the success of ones perseverance, it would have to be humility.
- I'll take it one step further and suggest that I really don't know if it's possible to overstate how important humility is in the life of a Christian.
- I say that because, wisdom comes vis-à-vis humility, and it's when I'm beat up and knocked down, that I need the wisdom of God the most.

Proverbs 11:2 NKJV When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.

Proverbs 22:4 NKJV By humility and the fear of the LORD Are riches and honor and life.

Proverbs 29:23 NKJV A man's pride will bring him low, But the humble in spirit will retain honor.

Proverbs 15:33 NKJV The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, And before honor is humility.

James 1:2-8 NIV Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, (3) because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. (4) Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (5) If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. (6) But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. (7) That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; (8) he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

- Here's the bottom line, God will generously give wisdom via humility to any who are lacking in it, are asking for it, and are not doubting of it.
- When He does, that man will be stable in all he does so much so that even when he gets knocked down he's stable enough to get back up.
- Show me a humble Christian, and I'll show you a stable Christian who gets up and presses on. Why wouldn't we want to be that Christian?